

SITUATION REPORT NO. 31
INCIDENT NO. 99-009
DATE: August 19, 1999 TIME: 3:00 p.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Storms and flooding - Above normal soil moisture content throughout North Dakota, compounded by seven years of flooding and additional precipitation, has resulted in overland, river and flash flooding and ground movement (landslides and mudslides). Excessive high winds associated with storm and tornado activity have contributed to ongoing problems faced by North Dakotans.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: Devils Lake floodwaters have inundated approximately 4,090 acres of forests since 1993, the N.D. Forest Service has reported. The majority of the estimated 1.1 million trees that have died are still standing. A report indicates that few, if any, of these dead trees below the current lake elevation appear to have been removed or salvaged. These trees and their floating debris pose a safety threat to recreation users of the lake and eventually could cause potential damages to lakefront properties, bridges and roads. More than 1,700 additional forest acres and 473,000 more trees will be impacted if the lake rises six feet above its current elevation to 1,453 feet, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' proposed level for constructing an emergency outlet.
The level of Devils Lake at Creel Bay measured 1,447.11 feet on August 19. Based on damage assessment reports (DAR's), the State Emergency Board unanimously voted to recommend a Secretarial Declaration for North Dakota. The Governor has endorsed that recommendation. Damage assessment reports indicated that 52 of 53 North Dakota counties may meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) criteria for disaster eligibility. The USDA's Farm Service Agency plans to conduct a re-assessment of Golden Valley County, which was not included in the 52 counties, but has since suffered severe heat and storms.
4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: Twenty-two members of the Team for Interfaith Rural Support (unmet needs committee) met August 16 in Bottineau to elect officers, review the group's bylaws and discuss the team's mission. The team will serve disaster victims in Renville, Bottineau, Rolette and McHenry Counties.
6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Community Relations staff members for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have visited 273 North Dakotans who are 70 years of age or older. Staff members have been providing information about registration and disaster assistance programs. They hope to visit 600 older North Dakotans.

Program Updates for FEMA-1279-DR-ND

Staff for the state Public Assistance Program has delivered \$1.6 million in initial project worksheets to eligible applicants. The program has received a total 290 applications from eligible 41 counties, 136 cities, 14 electrical cooperatives, 28 school districts, 13 park districts, 22 water resource boards, five Indian reservations, seven state agencies and 24 others to include private non-profit organizations providing essential governmental services.

North Dakota Job Service has received 6,402 claims for Disaster Unemployment Assistance. As of August 19, \$6,241,091 in benefits has been paid to farmers, ranchers, farm workers, migrant workers and other self-employed individuals who lost income because of the disaster.

To date, 8,630 North Dakotans have registered for assistance through FEMA teleregistration center. Of those, 6,727 have applied for Disaster Housing Assistance. To date, FEMA has paid \$9 million in benefits under the Disaster Housing Program. Of that amount, \$2.7 million has been designated for expanded habitability measures designed to mitigate future flood damages. Those measures include interior drain systems, sump pumps, gutters and downspouts, basement fills and land sloping work.

The Individual and Family Grant Program, administered by North Dakota Emergency Management, has received 4,209 applications and \$543,000 in benefits. The average grant amounts to approximately \$496.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has sent 7,069 applications to disaster victims and has administered \$3,285,300 million in loans as of August 19.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: Assistance has been provided, as reported.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: FEMA, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Red Cross, consulting engineers and members of the N.D. Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).
9. OTHER: Situation Reports published by the N.D. Division of Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet Home page. The address is: <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director